

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NOUAKC 01546 011305Z

46

ACTION AID-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 FDRE-00 OES-05 ACDA-10 IGA-01

AGR-10 EB-07 IO-10 COME-00 TRSE-00 INT-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02

DHA-02 ORM-01 PC-05 HEW-06 /101 W

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FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4169

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

UNCLAS NOUAKCHOTT 1546

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SENV, MR

SUBJECT: AFTER THE DROUGHT, THE DELUGE (SPEAKING RELATIVELY)

1. SINCE THE EVENING OF JULY 27, NOUAKPHOTT HAS RECEIVED MORE RAIN THAN DURING AW FOUR-DAY PERIOD IN RECENT MEMORY. 52 MILIMETERS OF RAIN HAVE FALLEN ON THE CAPITAL CITY. FOR A L TY ACCUSTOMED TO FIVE YEARS OF SEVERE DROUGHT AND PERIODIC SAND STORMS, THE "DELUGE" IS WELCOME RELIEF TO MOST RESIDENTS IN SPITE OF LEAKING ROOFS, COLLAPSED TENTS, FLOODED ROADS, AND ELECTRICAL FAILURES, THE RAIN HAS CAUSED SERIOUS, BUT TEMPORARY, HARDSHIP IN SOME OF THE RE-FUGEE AREAS AROUND NOKKCHOTT.

2. NOMADS USED TO SEARING WINDS AND HOT SAND COULD BE SEEN FROLIKING IN SHALLOW LAKES OF DOWNTOWN NOUAKCHOTT. CHILDREN PLAYED GLEEFULLY UNDER THE TORRENT OF RAIN. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS, THE DUSTY PATINA OF SAND AND DIRT HAS BEEN WASHED FROM THE TREES AND BUILDINGS OF NOUAKCHOTT, THUS REMINDING THE LOCAL DENIZENS THAT TREES REALLY ARE GREEN. ALREADY ESTABLISHED TREES AND SHRUBS HAVE CONVERTED THE RAIN INTO ADDED CENTIMETERS OF NEW GROWTH. WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK OR TWO WE HOPE TO SEE A

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PAGE 02 NOUAKC 01546 011305Z

BLANKET OF GREEN WHERE ONCE THERE WAS ONLY DESERT SAND.

3. THE ONLY GRUMBLES IN THE AMERRAN MISSION WERYDIWEARD FROM OUR HARD-PRESSED ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION. REPEATED ELECTRICAL OUTAGES, FLOODED DRIVEWAYS, STALLED VEHICLES, BLOWN LIGHT BULBS, AND LEAKS NEVER BEFORE KNOWN TO EXIST PREVENTED THE ADMIN STAFF FROM SOAKING UP THE PLEASURES OF THE RAIN STORMS.

4. THURSDAY MORNING DAWNED CLEAR, CRISP.' AND MOST IMPORTANT, GREEN. AFTER YEARS OF BROWN DROUGHT, SOME OF THE OLD TIMERS IN THE MISSION WERE HAVING TROUBLE RECALLING TO MEMORY THE VISUAL IMAGES OF THE COLOR GREEN. ALTHOUGH WE MAY NOT HAVE A RAIN LIKE THIS FOR ANOTHER FIVE YEARS, THIS ONE WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN SOON. HANDYSIDE

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